

## NEW BOOKS.

**Mr. Hewlett's Latest Story.**  
The opening chapter describing the father and mother and five daughters of a respectable family in Mr. Maurice Hewlett's story of "Open Country" (Charles Scribner's Sons) is keen and amusing and altogether delightful. We must have a great liking for Vicky, or Victoria Perival, who at 22 made astonishing epigrams about her mother and about other people who invited strongly her ingenious comment, but of course it was Sanchia, the youngest daughter, the beauty of the family, who was 20 and very serious, who overwhelmed us.

In the second chapter we have a recurrence of Senhouse, the gentleman gypsy of one of the author's earlier stories. He made us a little doubtful because, it will be remembered, he knew all the poets, and had radical theories and lived an extravagantly simple life, notwithstanding that his father owned a coal mine. A reformer who wears sandals and prefers dry sand to soap, and quivers with appreciative despair when he recalls (as Senhouse frequently does) Shelley's phrase, put in the mouth of Panthea, "the space within my plumes," is qualified to excite our apprehensions.

Senhouse here is blessed with very effective humor, and he shows us from the start that he can be immensely interesting. It is a little difficult to believe that Sanchia, who was London bred, could have been quite unconscious and innocent when she went wading in the lily pool. Still we feel it ungracious to doubt the strong intimations of the story. At 20 she was serious and sincere. She was also a reasonably completed and a beautiful figure.

The story—scribes frankly the scene at the lily pool. We read "Preparations began. Senhouse rolled up his flannel trousers as high as they would go and pushed up the sleeves of his sweater. The young lady produced pins from somewhere about her person and holding them in her mouth proceeded to bind her raiment about her middle and to secure it there. Without a tremor or visible flicker of self-consciousness she revealed to this chance acquaintance as fine a pair of legs as anybody could have to show. Not Artemis, high girl for the chase, could have bared finer or dared more. The artist in our friend admired and the man was stirred. He dated his subjection from that moment."

The letters of Senhouse to Sanchia overflowed with his own lyrical, scholarly, reformatory and extremely interesting intelligence. He called her a renaissance of Artemis, the Chaste and Fair. He set her to inciting as to the meaning of anarchy and the rights of property. Of course the subject of religion came to engage her eager mind. The story says: "A young Sanchia of 20 years, her hair newly put up and the seriousness upon her of the hush before sunrise—what was she to do, confronted by these questions? What could she do but inquire of her friend his view of God?" It is added that she did it with a very sober pen and with lips pale and compressed.

His answer is full of interest. He touched upon his own habit of pouring a moderate libation to Pan and the nymphs as often as he had beer. He said that he seldom went to church because he felt more aware of high God out of doors. The god for him was old Terminus, who insisted upon being worshipped in the open air, with the consequence that, when they enclosed him in the temple of Capitoline Jove they had to leave a hole in the roof for his express benefit. Wasn't it Oliver Wendell Holmes who did not approve of growing oaks in flower pots? "Wise old man," commented Senhouse, making proverbs like Polonius. "St. in a cathedral this vagabond managed to get a thrill. 'Out of the gray stillness,' he wrote to Sanchia, 'a boy's young voice goes spearing and trembling up, and you forget all about the shock headed rogue in his tumbled surplice and believe for a few blessed

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Marie made an end of herself. She plunged the remorseless metal into her own bosom. But she did not yield to death immediately. She remembered that she had a message to leave. The author does not spare us at this point. "Notice," he says, "with what effort, with what incredible torture she manages to raise herself, her marble countenance facing the spot covered by the moonbeam. Her left hand supports her. Her right—watch it. It withdraws the knife. Now her finger is rubbed here and there upon her breast. Now she raises it—see! it is dripping with her blood. She begins to write in crimson letters on the wall."

We may be thankful that these distressing scenes are offset by a humor that is as remarkable as they are. The three chief characters, the reclaimed convict, the giant minister and the benevolent gambler, are all witty. Seldom in the dialogue of a tale do we find such a quantity and such a quality of repartee. From a publisher's notice we learn that a number of people to whom the book has been sent have been profoundly impressed by it and have even suspected that it is "the" American novel.

Very Good Indeed.

Alice Duer Miller's story of "Less Than Kin" (Henry Holt and Company) is admirably written and full of interest. It tells how young Vickers, who was off in a South American country because the United States did not seem a safe place for him, assumed the personality of another exile named Lee, who had died of drink; how he came to New York and established himself in the exclusive Lee family; how he lived down an evil reputation that the dead Lee had left behind him; and how a girl who thought that she had reason to hate him at first came to love him at last, notwithstanding that she was engaged to another man.

The story is ingenious. It has quick turns and surprises. It is very well done. Raffles Again. Not only is Mr. E. W. Hornung's "Mr. Justice Raffles" (Charles Scribner's Sons) a rattling good story, it is a good long story in which the incidents are woven together with art; the best work, we should say, that the author has turned out yet. The reader will find it difficult to lay the book down after taking it up. Raffles of course is the same, though Mr. Hornung seems inclined to inject some tinge of regret, if not of remorse, into his makeup. All evil at resurrection is stopped by making this tale an episode in Raffles's past. The author may feel flattered at the testimony the police records give to the influence his books have had on the rising generation. The adventure part of the burglar's profession in times of peace seems attractive to youth as devoid of moral sense as his hero. Most readers, however, will disregard the lack of morality in a very exciting story; perhaps they will agree with Mr. Hornung's estimate of the comparative iniquity of the gentleman burglar and the unscrupulous money lender.

A Connecticut Country.

An interesting addition to local history is made by Mr. Dwight C. Kilbourn's compilation "The Bench and Bar of Litchfield County, Connecticut, 1700-1900" (the author, Litchfield, Conn.). This includes Chief Justice Church's address at the centennial of the county, the reminiscences of three distinguished lawyers, historical notes and accounts of noted trials, articles on county officials, on early law reports, on the county jail and on various legal anecdotes and jests and a catalogue of the students in the famous Litchfield law school, the first law school in the country. A large part of the volume is taken up with brief biographies of lawyers who have practiced at the Litchfield county bar.

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